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REMARKS

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton
At the Forum for the Future

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Marrakech, Morocco

SECRETARY CLINTON: So it is a pleasure to join you for this discussion, and I especially recognize the significance of having governor – government ministers and civil society leaders talking together about these issues of common concern. That may be too rare at sight, but it shouldn't be, because our goal is to listen, learn, and discover new ways that we can work as partners for the good of the people that we represent.

Like all of you, I have experienced firsthand the warm hospitality and openness of the Moroccan people. And yesterday, I had the opportunity in a meeting with King Mohammed VI to express my appreciation for the progress that Morocco is achieving; in particular, the reforms that have granted new freedom to women who now bring their considerable talents to strengthening democratic institutions, accelerating economic growth, and broadening the work of civil society.

On a previous visit to this beautiful country 10 years ago, I had the opportunity to meet with many of the citizens of Morocco. I remember well having a chance to listen to an illiterate father who endorsed his young daughter's dream of becoming a doctor and meeting devout women who had risen up to become advocates for human rights on local councils. Examples like this remind us there is much in Morocco's experience that we can look to guide our efforts today.

Five months ago in Cairo, President Obama called for a new beginning between the United States and Muslim communities around the world – a relationship that is comprehensive rather than focused on a few political and security issues, a relationship based on partnership between people as well as government, and a relationship that lasts for the long term. Those were some of the important words that President Obama spoke in Cairo, and his speech generated a great deal of enthusiasm around the world. Many people heard his call and asked, what can we do; what can you, the United States do; how will President Obama's vision bear out in a new approach to U.S. policy; and how will that new approach translate into meaningful changes in people's everyday lives?

As President Obama and I believe, it is results, not rhetoric, that matter in the end. Economic empowerment, education, healthcare, access to energy and to credit, these are the basics that all communities need to thrive. And the United States seeks to pursue these common aspirations through concrete actions. We know that true progress comes from within a society and cannot

be imposed from the outside, and we know that change does not happen overnight. So we will not focus our energies on one-time projects, but we will seek to work with all of you in government and in civil society to try to build local capacity and empower local organizations and individuals to create sustainable change.

I have asked our Embassy to engage with local communities to solicit ideas for how the United States could be a better partner. I also appointed the first-ever U.S. Special Representative to Muslim communities. The ideas we have heard have helped to shape our plan. Farah Pandith, our new Special Representative, is traveling widely and listening and coming back and expressing the concerns that she has heard from those who are living and working for a better life.

Now, we are focused on three broad areas where we believe U.S. support can make a difference. The first comes from the work and research that has been done over many years. When you ask people in all countries in this region or anywhere in the world what is the biggest concern you have and what do you want to see that happens differently in the future, the answer overwhelmingly is “I want a better job. I want rising income. I want to give my family, especially my children, more opportunities.” It cuts across every society no matter where that society is.

I often say that while talent is universal, opportunity is not. And so we are committed to building ladders of opportunity to help develop the enormous talents that reside in the people of this region. Early next year, the President will host an entrepreneurship summit in Washington to convene people focused on creating small businesses, expanding their businesses, taking the talent that they have and translating it into income generations to assist their families.

We have launched a website for this summit. It is www.entrepreneurship.gov/summit. And I invite you to submit the names for delegates that could possibly benefit from coming to this summit, and please provide your comments on topics for the agenda. Because this summit is part of a broader effort to expand support for entrepreneurship in the region, including by establishing new business development centers. It is also my hope that together, we can launch a virtual entrepreneur network that connects the range of people engaged in such activities in the region and even beyond.

There are so many good ideas that die because the conditions are not right for bringing those ideas to market. There are so many people who work so hard every day that they can't realize the benefits of that hard work to the extent that they should. Now we already, as you know, give billions of dollars in ongoing direct aid programs in this region, ranging from a community's livelihood program in Yemen to a youth employment program in Jordan to our work here in Morocco.

We have invested \$700 million in Morocco through a Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact. And this is an approach that we are working on that grows and has a partnership between our government and the government of people of a country – in this case, Morocco – where we say we're not here to tell you what you need from us; we're here to ask you what we can do to help you realize your own goals. In this case, we are supporting to two agricultural

sectors – fruit tree farms and small-scale fisheries – as well as artisan craft and strengthening financial services and enterprise support. Over and over, we hear from small and medium-sized businesses that cannot get the financial assistance, they can't get the technical support that would grow their business. So working with the Government of Morocco, we are hoping to really help to see blossom a lot more economic activity at the lower level that will then, from the bottom up, build prosperity.

Our second area will be advancing science and technology, something that we have heard from many of you, to help create jobs and to meet global challenges. It's not something you don't know; it is your history. But it was the Islamic world that led the way in science and medicine. It was the Islamic world that paved the way for much of the technology and science that we now take for granted. And now we face global challenges. How do we address water issues? How do we solve the climate crisis? How do we eradicate disease? Well, we want to look to your societies and we want to help Muslim majority communities develop the capacity to meet economic, social and ecological challenges through science, technology, and innovation.

The State Department has established a science envoys program, and I'm pleased to announce today that the first envoys will be three of America's leading scientists: Dr. Bruce Albert*, a former president of our National Academy of Sciences; Dr. Elias Zerhouni, a former director of our National Institutes of Health; and Dr. Ahmad Zawawi, the Nobel Prize-winning chemist. Each of these men has agreed to travel to North Africa, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia to fulfill President Obama's mandate to foster scientific and technological collaboration. The State Department will also expand positions for environment, science, technology, and health officers* at our embassies. To finance these solutions, the United States Overseas Private Investment Corporation known as OPIC is launching a technology and innovation fund.

Our third area of engagement is education. Last week, I announced our support for a new program for higher education in Pakistan. We have also begun a program to support partnership between U.S. community colleges and institutions in Muslim communities to share knowledge and to train students for good jobs. We are expanding our scholarship opportunities, particularly for underserved secondary school students. One of our most successful education programs is called Access. It provides English language instructions to bright students in poor communities. I am personally committed to this program, and I look for ways to provide additional support, because I have seen firsthand its power.

Earlier this year, I visited an Access classroom in Ramallah. I walked into an enthusiastic discussion of Women's History Month. These were students who did not come from educated families, but they were students with the same ambition and motivation that we heard described by our colleague, the Palestinian foreign minister, about his own son. We want to create more opportunities for students like these to fulfill their God-given potential.

And this points to a related priority – the empowerment of women. I have said, as some of you know, for many years, and President Obama said it in Cairo, no country can achieve true progress or fulfill its own potential when half of its people are left behind. When little girls are not given the same opportunities for education, we have no idea what we are losing out on

because they're not going to be able to contribute to the growth and the development of their countries.

The United States has named our first-ever Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, Ambassador Melanne Vermeer. We strongly support the call made at last year's Forum for the Future for the creation of a regional gender institute to help advance women's empowerment across the board politically, economically, educationally, legally, socially, and culturally. And we look forward to working with other governments and civil societies to launch this initiative soon. And we will provide initial funding to make it a priority.

We seek to support civil society efforts worldwide because we believe that civil society helps to make communities more prosperous and stable. It helps to drive economic growth that benefits the greatest number of people. And it pushes political institutions to be agile and responsive to the people they serve. So the United States is launching an initiative called Civil Society 2.0. This organized effort will provide new technologies to civil society organizations. We will send experts in digital technology and communications to help build capacity.

Now, these are some of the ways that the United States is pursuing President Obama's vision for a new relationship. Our work is based on empowering individuals rather than promoting ideologies; listening and embracing others' ideas rather than simply imposing our own; and pursuing partnerships that are sustainable and broad-based. We believe that despite our differences, there is so much more that unites us. Fathers and mothers everywhere want safety and opportunity for their daughters and sons. People everywhere want to have a role in the decisions that affect them, to express their needs to their leaders to be heard, and to help chart their own futures.

I also want to make clear that the United States is committed to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. I know this is a matter that is of grave and pervasive concern among the countries represented here, but even far beyond this region. We are committed to a two-state solution, and we are determined and persistent in the pursuit of that goal. It is important that we all work toward that objective. And I think that does require that all parties should be careful about what we say, the kind of recriminations that are so understandable, but we need to work together in a constructive spirit toward this shared goal of a comprehensive peace.

I believe very strongly that it is attainable. I believe that President Obama's commitment is understood. And I believe that with your support, we can find a way through the difficult and tangled history that too often prevents us from making progress on this most important issue. As leaders of countries that have a direct stake and care deeply about all of the final status issues that must be resolved, I would just ask you to think about how we can each demonstrate the commitment that is necessary for us to go forward.

Now, we can maintain an allegiance to the past, but we cannot change the past. No matter what we say about it, it is behind us. Or we can work together and follow the vision and the inspiration of President Obama to help shape a future that will be so much better for the children of both the Palestinians and the Israeli families. I am hopeful we can succeed in creating that better world together, because I know what could lie ahead for us if we do.

And I thank you for having a forum about the future, because that is what we have to determine together. And I appreciate the opportunity to be here to build on the vision of the President's speech in Cairo, but to go to the concrete actions with specific results that are necessary, whether it is making peace, creating jobs, or educating our children so that the people we represent can see their lives improving, because at the end of the day, that is what we are all committed to try to achieve. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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